

SOCL 4462 SOCIOLOGY OF YOUTH AND CRIME

“Violence among young people is an aspect of their desire to create. They don’t know how to use their energy creatively so they do the opposite and destroy.” -- Anthony Burgess, English author

Fall 2018

Section 1: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. in Stubbs 220

Professor: **Michael S. Barton, Ph.D.**
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Office Hours: Mondays and Thursday from **9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and by appointment.**

This course explores topics related to the definition and measurement of juvenile delinquency, the dominant theories used to explain why youth engage in various types of criminal activity, and how youth are treated by agents of the criminal justice system.

What should you expect to get from this course?

1. Understand how delinquency is defined and measured.
2. Learn about, and be able to discuss and apply, the major theories of delinquency.
3. Understand how social, economic, and other factors affect delinquency (and perceptions of delinquency) in the United States.
4. Understand the advantages and limitations of the various strategies that have been used to control delinquency.
5. Be able to critically examine claims related to delinquency made by academic and non-academic sources.

Course Materials:

REQUIRED:

1. Bernstein, Nell. 2014. *Burning Down the House: The End of Juvenile Prison*. New York: The New Press.
2. McNamara, Robert Hartmann and Carrie Coward Bucher. 2012. *Problem Children: Special Populations in Delinquency*. Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press.
3. Singer, Simon I. 2014. *America's Safest City: Delinquency and Modernity in Suburbia*. New York: New York University Press.
4. Additional readings posted to Moodle.

General Course Guidelines:

(1) *Classroom Participation and Etiquette:* It is expected that all students will participate in class discussions and activities. Your participation helps you and your classmates to learn, practice, and actively engage with class materials. We will sometimes be discussing controversial and sensitive topics, during which time debates are not only acceptable, but expected. I expect that all classroom

communications will be respectful. I work hard to create a learning environment where all viewpoints are respected and, thus, **will not tolerate racist, sexist, homophobic, or other insulting comments.**

(2) *Attendance:* **Punctual** class attendance is vital for learning and is required by university policy. **You are personally responsible for obtaining notes from classes that you miss.** I strongly encourage you to make friends with at least two other people in this class in case you (or they) need notes. I request that students be willing to allow other students to photocopy their notes. I will not release lecture notes, but PowerPoints will be posted after each class. Much of the material covered in lecture IS NOT in your readings. Likewise, the readings introduce crucial material that helps illuminate the lectures and discussions.

(3) *Academic Integrity:* **Any student who engages in academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty), will receive a failing grade on the quiz or assignment for the first offense. Second offenses will result in referral to the University Judicial System, which includes more serious punishments (suspension, expulsion etc.) Please familiarize yourself with the Undergraduate Academic Regulations:**
<http://saa.lsu.edu/code-student-conduct>

(4) *Computers and other Technological Devices:* Laptops, PDA's, cell phones, pagers, iPods, iPads, iPhones, and other technology devices should be used to access Moodle **WHILE IN CLASS.** All other purposes are not only distracting to your own learning, but also to those around you. I reserve the right to limit the use of such technology in the classroom environment if I feel access to technology has become disruptive to lectures or class discussions.

(5) *Disabled Students:* If you qualify for extra accommodations because of a diagnosed disability, please submit a letter to Dr. Barton from Disability Services by the third week of class so that arrangements can be made as needed. Disability Services is located in 115 Johnston Hall (225) 578-5919: <http://disability.lsu.edu/>

Course Grade:

(1) **Three Non-Cumulative Exams:** Exams will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions that draw upon the material covered in the readings, lectures, videos, and discussions. If you know from experience that you have trouble with quizzes or exams, I strongly encourage you to contact academic support services. You will not receive a letter grade until the final grade in the course.

All exams must be taken on the assigned date. **No make-ups will be granted except with an official letter from the undergraduate dean.** University approved make-up quizzes will be different from the quiz given to the regular class. **The last exam is NOT cumulative, but will be held on the university scheduled date for the final exam.**

(2) **In-class Assignments:** Periodically, we will do brief (2-10 minutes) individual or group exercises in class. These will be **unannounced** and involve answering a question, applying concepts or theories, or reflecting on an issue related to criminology. Each student will turn in a

write-up, unless otherwise instructed. **Students are allowed to miss up to two (2) of these assignments without losing points.**

(3) **Book Review Assignments:** You will be required to write two book reviews. The first book review will be about *America's Safest City* and the second will be on *Burning Down the House*. Book reviews will be approximately 1,000 words (roughly 3-4 pages) in length. The point of a scholarly book review is not to summarize the content of the book, but to evaluate critically the author's purpose, thesis, contentions, and methods of analysis. Hence, the bulk of the body of one's review essay will be an evaluation of how convincing was the author's presentation of his/her thesis, and a commentary on the book's contribution to one's understanding of important issues for the study of juvenile delinquency. Each book review will be worth up to 100 points of the final course grade. Due dates for each book review are identified in the course schedule. Additional directions for this assignment will be posted to Moodle.

(4) **Juvenile Justice Reform Paper:** This paper will require you to develop and justify an argument about whether juvenile justice system reform is necessary or unnecessary. This assignment will require you to draw upon material discussed throughout the course, but especially from Module 3. Whether you believe such a change to necessary or not, you will be required to draw upon material from throughout the course to support your argument. I expect this paper will be about 4 to 5 pages in length. Additional information about this assignment will be provided after Exam 2.

(5) **Grading:** The final letter grade will be based on the numeric score as follows:

Three Exams (20 points each)	= 600 points
In-class Exercises	= 100 points
Book Review Assignments (75 points each)	= 150 points
<u>Juvenile Justice System Paper</u>	<u>= 150 points</u>
Total Possible Points	= 1000 points

YOUR FINAL GRADE CAN BE CALCULATED BY DIVIDING THE NUMBER OF POINTS YOU HAVE RECEIVED BY 1000 AND THEN MULTIPLYING BY 100. POINT TOTALS WILL ONLY BE ROUNDED UP TO THE NEAREST WHOLE NUMBER.

A+ (97-100), A (93-96.9), A- (90-92.9), B+ (87-89.9), B (83-86.9), B- (80-82.9), C+ (77-79.9), C (73-76.9), C- (70-72.9), D+ (67-69.9), D (63-66.9), D- (60-62.9), F (0-59.9)

Final Note: A Syllabus is a form of a contract designed to protect both the student and the professor so all parties are informed of the rules. If you have any concerns with the requirements of this class, please meet with Professor Barton early in the session.

Course Schedule: ALL READINGS SHOULD BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE START OF CLASS.

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
MODULE 1		
8 / 21	What is this class about?	No Reading Assigned
8 / 23	How were the concepts of “youth” and “delinquency” constructed?	McNamara and Bucher Chapter 1
8 / 28	How has the juvenile court system changed over time?	Bowman* Meng, Segal and Boden*
8 / 20	How is delinquency measured?	van Batenburg-Eddes et al.* Conley*
9 / 4	What are some of the myths and realities about juvenile delinquency?	Rhineberger-Dunn*
9 / 6	What tools do we use to identify juvenile offenders?	Kennedy et al.*
9 / 11	What do we know about sex offenses committed by juveniles?	Fox and De Lisi* McNamara and Bucher Chapters 2 and 3 (skim)
9 / 13	Why do you youth engage in serious violent offenses?	McNamara and Bucher Chapter 6
9 / 18	What do we know about mass school shootings and what can be done to prevent them?	Agnich*
9 / 20	Catch-up and Review (if time is available)	
9 / 25	Exam 1	
MODULE 2		
	In-class Discussion of <i>America’s Safest Cities</i>	Book reviews must be submitted to Turn-It-In before the start of class
9 / 27	How do youth learn delinquency?	Harding*
10 / 2	Why are labels important?	Kavish et al.*
10 / 4	Fall Holiday – No Class Meeting	
10 / 9	What prevents people from engaging in crime?	Hirschi*
10 / 11	How is delinquency and crime controlled throughout the life course?	Farrell and Zimmerman*
10 / 16	Does strain or stress cause delinquency?	Moon and Morash*
10 / 18	How do contextual factors influence participation in delinquency?	Vogel and Barton*
10 / 23	Catch-up and review	
10 / 25	Exam 2	
MODULE 3		
10 / 30	In-class Discussion of <i>Burning Down the House</i>	Book reviews must be submitted to Turn-It-In before the start of class
11 / 1	What influences the interaction of youth and police?	Wu et al.*
11 / 6	How are youth treated by the court system?	Lieber et al.*
11 / 8	Guest Speaker: TBD	
11 / 13	What types of institutional and residential strategies are used to control delinquency?	Zettler et al.*
11 / 15	VICE News Documentary: Raised in the System	
11 / 20	How effective are community-based corrections?	Erhard-Dietzel et al. 2017 Mears et al.*
11 / 22	Thanksgiving Break – No Class Meeting	
11 / 27	Catch-up and Review; Questions about final papers	
11 / 29	In-class discussion of Juvenile Justice Reform Papers.	Papers must be submitted to Turn-It-In before the start of class.
12 / 7	Exam 3 – <u>Not cumulative</u>. Will be administered in regular classroom from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	

